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NO. 021

GENERAL

CIA - S

1. British anticipate accelerated Soviet peace offensive--US Embassy London transmits the view of a British Foreign Office official that current vague "feelers" and rumors concerning the lifting of the Berlin blockade by the USSR should be regarded as preparation for an all-out Soviet "peace offensive." The British official reasons that because the Kremlin must realize that the blockade has boomeranged against the USSR and has actually strengthened anti-Communist sentiment both in Germany and among the western powers, a change of tactics is essential if the USSR is to regain the initiative. The official considers that a Soviet peace move is imminent and may be launched on May Day. He believes that such a peace gesture would consist of a proposal for: (a) the lifting of the blockade and counter-blockade; and (b) Four Power discussions of German questions, including the establishment of a single German government. Although the Foreign Office official believes that the British public would not be taken in by such a peace move, he fears it would strike a responsive chord in France, Italy, and elsewhere in Western Europe.

(CIA Comment: CIA agrees that the USSR is likely in the near future to make proposals for an East-West settlement involving the lifting of the Berlin blockade. Although it appears that a change of Soviet tactics is essential if the USSR is to regain the initiative, there is no specific evidence that Soviet strategy has changed sufficiently to permit the proposal of terms acceptable to the western powers.)

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